



March 27, 2017

Chair Greelick, Vice-Chair Hayden, Vice-Chair Nosse, my name is Kyndall Mason, I am a political and policy strategist for SEIU local 503. Thank you for letting me have a moment to speak in regards to HB 3085, which pertains to a training fund for healthcare professionals. As a union we represent more than 25,000 home care, personal support and nursing home workers,

We, at SEIU, think this sort of concept is great, and inline with much of the work that is being done currently to make sure we have a well trained and robust workforce in long term care. I wanted to testify today to make sure that as we talk about healthcare workforce development that we include long term care in the definition of health care.

Long term care in Oregon is one of the fastest growing sectors of work, and need, in the country. According to APD's own analysis, in the next 15 years, the population of Oregonians over the age of 65 could nearly double, growing from just over 600,000 residents today, to just under 1.2 million by 2030, and, as a group, they have hardly any retirement savings. This means that not only is our aging population growing rapidly, but they have less and less money to fall back on in retirement and will be dependent on Medicaid/Medicare funded supports.

We are already facing a workforce crisis in the sector, with facilities and consumers of home care services alike, struggling to find and hire well trained people ready to do the work. With incentives like HB 3085 creating a healthcare training fund, we can make sure that Oregon remains a pioneer in long term care, by having a well trained workforce, ready to complete the mission of long term care in Oregon, which is to make sure that people can live with choice, independence and dignity.

There is currently work being done through the Oregon Home Care Commission to make sure that we are strategically developing a workforce that will be ready for the demand, but that only covers home care and personal support workers and that work will take resources and commitment. There is still need for investments in training for group homes, nursing home, assisted living, and memory care facilities so that Oregon's seniors and people with disabilities have access to a qualified and well trained workforce and we think they should be involved in this effort.

Thank you for your time today

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